

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEGUCIGALPA 000193

SIPDIS

STATE FOR P, INL, I, WHA, WHACEN AND WHA/PPC
SOUTHCOM FOR GENERAL HILL
JIATF-S FOR RADM SIROIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/23/2014

TAGS: [SNAR](#) [MOPS](#) [PINS](#) [PREL](#) [MCAP](#) [PINR](#) [HO](#)

SUBJECT: DRUG PLANE CRASH SITE VISIT -- NO SMOKING GUN JUST
CHARRED WRECKAGE

REF: A. STATE 15961 (NOTAL)

[B](#). TEGUCIGALPA 179

[C](#). USDAO TEGUCIGALPA IIR 6 841 9971 04

Classified By: Political Counselor Francisco L. Palmieri
for reason 1.5 (b) and (d)

[1](#). (C) On 1/23/04, U.S. country team members (DEA, DAO, JTF-B, and MILGP) visited the site of 1/20/04 drug-trafficking air crash and were given full and unimpeded access by Government of Honduras (GOH) authorities. The Embassy team was accompanied by the Honduran Soto Cano Air Base Liaison Officer and a Honduran Air Force (HAF) Command staff intelligence officer. The accompanying HAF officials facilitated access and responded forthrightly to all inquiries. The team was on the ground at the site for almost two hours.

[2](#). (C) The country team group, which included two U.S. military pilots, were able to closely inspect the burned out fuselage, other strewn wreckage, and the entire surrounding area of the crash site. They were able to examine four remaining pieces of aircraft (representing about 10 per cent of the aircraft): two engines, a wing, and the tail section. It did not appear that any of this wreckage was struck by bullet fire. The remaining wreckage was either charred or destroyed beyond recognition. Serial numbers were obtained off the engines and will be reported septel through DAO and DEA messages.

[3](#). (C) One U.S. team member noted that it appears that the drug-trafficking aircraft hit the ground on its belly and not on its nose, which would be consistent with the GOH's scenario of a stalled aircraft which lost control and crashed. The site is quite difficult to reach in an area of treacherous and mountainous terrain. The area would be extremely difficult to navigate on a low-altitude evasive flight path.

[4](#). (C) COMMENT: For the moment, Honduran cooperation has been forthcoming, although both HAF officials did inquire about the specific objective of the site visit. END COMMENT.
PALMER